It has been hard to settle down to real work since the flood, but I have got along all right, only one thing, I will never be able to forget my awful experience and narrow escape to my dying day. Human words could never describe the awfulness of it.

We pulled into the Union Depot at Pueblo June 3rd on time, 7:50 P.M. The yards were dry. We were notified that a bridge had gone out at Swallows 20 miles west of Pueblo, and that they were going to keep us in Pueblo all night. Nothing unusual about this. So I went to work, got what mail had been received worked up -- it was a very light mail as we missed our connections on account of high water.

The clerk with me was a new man, and his first trip on the Rio Grande. About 45 minutes after we had arrived at the depot, the messenger came running back to our car, and told us to look out the door. I looked out and was almost shocked to see the water was nearly up to the car floor, being probably 3 feet deep then. Lights were out in the depot and everywhere. In three or four minutes from this time a switch engine took us down in the yards about two blocks. Of course, everybody was on the train -- they had even taken on the passengers for the west. We were then about a block from Nuckols Packing Plant.

The water was getting higher and higher, and by this time running in the car. My assistant had gone back to the Pullmans. I concluded that I had better get back there too. So I took the registered mail and locked them in the messenger's safe, with his consent, as we didn't know what was going to happen. The Express messenger and I beat it back to the Pullmans; then sat there and watched the water come up over the seats. Of course, this was a roaring torrent on the outside by this time. Finally the water was half across the windows, ties came through the windows, and the water was traveling at the rate of 40 miles an hour. Finally, about 11 o'clock P.M. the cars turned over one after another. I was in a Pullman, when they went over, with three other fellows and the Pullman porter. Everybody seemed to disappear all at once. The Pullman we were in was rocking and we knew it was going over any minute. The Pullmans at both ends had just turned over, and we could hear the screaming and yelling for help.

There were two coal cars loaded with coal on the siding about 15 or 20 feet from the end of this Pullman. The water was a surging torrent between the Pullman and coal cars, being 14 feet deep. It came to the top of the coal cars. A switchman had been marooned on here and so we cut the bell cord on the Pullman, and the poor fellow that threw open the vestibule to throw the cord across to him was swept down with the torrent, as it seemed to be a mad rush of water. I grabbed the bell cord, holding to the handle of the vestibule, tying it to same and threw it across, and the switchman caught it.

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We pulled into the Union Depot at Pueblo June 3rd on time, 7:50 P.M. The yards were dry. We were notified that a bridge had gone out at Swallows 50 miles west of Pueblo, and that they were going to keep us in Pueblo all night. Nothing unusual about this. So I went to work, got what mail had been received worked up -- it was a very light mail as we missed our connections on account of high water.

The clerk with me was a new man, and his first trip on the Rio Grande. About 45 minutes after we had arrived at the depot, the messenger came running back to our car, and told us to look out the door. I looked out and was almost shocked to see the water was nearly up to the car floor, being probably 3 feet deep then. Lights were out in the depot and everywhere. In three or four minutes from this time a switch engine took us down in the yards about two blocks. Of course, everybody was on the train -- they had even taken on the passengers for the west. We were then about a block from Muskola packing plant.

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RUSSELL

Two fellows pulled themselves across to the coal car. Then I turned and asked the porter if he was going, and he said no, he couldn't make it. I had decided it was all up with me, but grabbed the rope, managing to keep my head out of the water, got across and on the coal car, and I beat it for the other coal car, as these two were coupled together, and this one was a little further away from the Pullman I had just left. I got on there just as the Pullman went over, and this upset the first coal car that I landed on. Then I could reach across to the top of the Pullman, this being about 1-1/2 feet out of the water on the very top, so there we sat, about six of us, for six hours.

It was 14 to 17 feet for fully a mile and a half all around us -- one surging torrent. Practically the whole of the Newton Lumber Yard came down there. In front of our car it had formed a sort of raft, and there were probably 25 or 30 people that had in some way gotten on there out of the cars. Along came a box car, hit this raft, and over they all went, down with the current, not one saved, as there was no way to save them. The only thing to do was to stay where you were and wait your turn. This is the way it seemed, as the car we were on would give a lurch every now and then and we thought sure we were gone. For six hours we sat there expecting to go any minute. I saw so many go down and the screaming for help was terrible. The next morning, about 5 A.M. it had gone down enough so we could get over to the Nuckols ~~Fire~~ Packing Plant,-- all of us that got out were there.

I certainly never was so cold in my life as I saw there drenched all night, and it just poured rain, and the wind blew, but we were glad to be alive. There were half a dozen bodies drifted up against the packing plant that morning and among them the porter I left when I grabbed the rope. I thought my helper had gone down, as I did not see him until next morning at Nuckols.

There were about 100 lost out of our train. The fireman drowned when the engine turned over, and the engineer they found three miles down the river on an island alive 24 hours after.

About noon we were taken to the south side and taken in by people looking after the survivors. This was the only part of Pueblo we could get to, as nearly all the business district was just naturally wiped out.

It was Sunday before we could get down to the wreckage again. It surely was a sight -- just one jumbled up mess. The mail car was upside down, had a house and a lot of lumber on top of it, and half full of mud.

I tried to get a wire through to Grace, but wires were all down. Sunday noon the first wires were sent, and I got one through to Grace and the Chief Clerk. Up to this time

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